Toronto metro

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016

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« THE METRO EFFECT »

MAKING TORONTO'S DEADLY STREETS SAFER

• Dangerous intersections redesigned • Proactive approach at City Hall • Beefed up road safety plan
How Metro's campaign made a difference in 2016, metroNEWS

Toronto metro

Your essential daily news | TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016 | High -2°C/Low -9°C Cloudy

Panda discovers snow at Toronto Zoo
VIDEO ON THE METRO APP

GOLDEN GLOBES
Ooh La La Land, look at you
metroLIFE

COMMUTER HELL
THE TTC'S NO GOOD, VERY BAD DAY
(And why it's quite likely to happen again)
metroNEWS

This is how you save the Internet from Trump

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
'Guerrilla archiving' workshop to preserve data

May Warren
Metro | Toronto

As the world prepares for a Donald Trump presidency, a group of concerned Torontonians are doing their part to stop crucial scientific and environmental information from disappearing into a black hole during his administration.

The University of Toronto's Technoscience Salon and Research Unit, a forum for untangling tough questions related to science, is hosting a "guerrilla archiving" event this weekend to "save environmental data from Trump."

It's part of a North-American wide movement to support the Internet Archive's End of Term 2016 project. The San Francisco based non-profit is working to preserve as much web-based scientific information available on U.S. government websites as possible. "We're trying to go after the data that might be lost," said event organizer Patrick Keilty, assistant professor at University of Toronto.

Every time an administration changes government websites change too, and some information risks falling through the cracks, Keilty said.

But scientists and activists are more worried than usual that Trump's administration will cut environmental budgets or restrict access to important data through the U.S. Freedom of Information Act.

During the day-long Toronto workshop, plans are to identify what information is vulnerable from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, help to archive it, and then hand the information over the Internet Archive.

"The Trump administration has been very explicit in not accepting climate change and wanting to remove environmental regulations," said Michelle Murphy, Director of Technoscience Research Unit. "They're not taking what we'd call an evidence based approach to governance."

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METRO NEWS

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Tuesday, December 13, 2016

TORONTO'S DEADLY STREETS THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Metro launched its Toronto's Deadly Streets campaign in June with the goal of making road safety a priority at city hall. This week, we look back on how far Toronto has come on the issue — **and the role our coverage played.**

Changes to 14 danger zones

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

Toronto is no longer "sitting on its hands" when it comes to redesigning roads to make them safer for pedestrians and cyclists, says the city's traffic safety manager.

In the past, safety improvements were only made to intersections if other road construction or maintenance was scheduled. That was a cost-saving measure.

But, under its new road safety regime, the city is getting proactive.

"I'm not waiting on the road reconstruction guys anymore. I'm telling them which intersections to do," said Roger Browne, head of traffic safety at city hall.

Since June, the city has reconfigured 14 intersections to improve safety, and more changes are on the way in 2017.

In many cases, the curbs were made larger, forcing cars to slow down when turning and reducing the crossing distances for pedestrians.

Many of the 14 intersections are located downtown — including Richmond and Yonge streets — but others are as far north as Bayview and Finch avenues. Each of the crossings was identified by staff as a hotspot for pedestrian and cyclists collisions.

Officials hope the changes will reduce the number of pedestrians killed in collisions. To date, 43 pedestrians have died this year — the highest number since 2002.

"Fundamentally, from a design perspective, we're doing anything we can to minimize pedestrian exposure to vehicles," Browne said.

At Dundas and River streets, an entire right-turn slip lane was removed. While popular with drivers, the lanes — which allow right-turning cars to bypass traffic signals — are considered dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists because they allow for turns at higher speeds.

"The local councillor had been trying to get that done for two years. Now, through the road safety plan, it was finally addressed," said Coun. Jaye Robinson, chair of the city's public works committee and an architect of the road plan.

Robinson says the revamped intersections are proof Toronto is turning the corner on road safety, acknowledging that the design of our streets is as — or more — important than enforcement or education campaigns.

"We've got a new lens on road safety in Toronto, and that's engineering," she said.

«THE METRO EFFECT»

Councillor credits coverage

Coun. Jaye Robinson credited Metro's coverage with generating the political will necessary to expand the city's road safety plan. After the series was published, the plan's budget was boosted by $12 million and its timeline was accelerated.

"I will fully admit that your publication has influenced this and probably aided in it being accelerated," Robinson told Metro on Monday.

"It's really brought it to the forefront and pushed both me as the person who spearheaded the initiative and staff to move forward quickly and fast-track things."

MAKING CHANGE The busy downtown intersection of Yonge and Richmond is one of 14 locations that city has redesigned with pedestrian safety in mind. EDUARDO LIMA/METRO

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York human rights complaint settled

SEXUAL ASSAULT

School to provide specialized counselling

A human rights complaint claiming York University failed to support a student who was sexually assaulted has been settled.

Mandi Gray, a PhD student at York, alleged the university's policies and protocols for when a student is sexually assaulted by another student or staff member were unclear and insufficient.

A joint statement released Monday by the university states that the application has been settled with no admission of liability by York, or concession by Gray.

"Although the parties were unable to reach an agreement on many issues, part of the resolution of the (Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario) application is that the university will collaborate with sexual assault centres to provide specialized counselling to sexual violence survivors from the York community," the statement says.

Mandi Gray, a University of Toronto PhD student who was sexually assaulted by a fellow student. EDUARDO LIMA/METRO

The other terms of the settlement are confidential.

The statement continues: "York University strives to be a progressive institution that believes in social justice and respects Ms. Gray's efforts to bring public attention to the issue of sexual assault and the treatment of survivors."

In an interview, Gray would not comment on the terms of the settlement but said there are larger questions to be asked about what can be achieved through litigation versus activism.

"There are definitely more changes that are needed," she said.

Since Gray's complaint in June 2015, York University has released new interim guidelines for responding to sexual violence including a Sexual Violence Response Office. Consultations with campus groups are ongoing.

Gray has criticized the guidelines for not going far enough to support sexual assault survivors.

Her attacker, Mustafa Ururyar, was found guilty of sexual assault earlier this year and is appealing his conviction.

The appeal hearing is set for next year.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

BUDGET

Cuts unfairly impact residents: Experts

A group of academics and representatives from community agencies assembled by the city say Mayor John Tory's request for across-the-board budget cuts unfairly impacts the city's most disadvantaged and vulnerable residents.

At the request of council, staff reported back on the social and economic impacts of Tory's request that all city divisions and agencies find 2.6 per cent in reductions — what has been part of his carefully-crafted narrative about first saving money before announcing plans to raise needed revenues, including tolling the Gardiner Expressway and the Don Valley Parkway. But that exercise, the expert group says, was flawed from the start.

Tory has argued that all departments needed to participate in the search for "efficiencies" — that the public expects governments to find a way to "do the same for less." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ontarians for water rights

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

Ontarians are throwing their support behind an effort to consider environmental rights on par with other basic human rights.

Results from a Nanos poll released Tuesday by the David Suzuki Foundation show 97 per cent of Ontario residents support making access to clean water a human right. Over 70 per cent said they also want stricter laws to protect the environment. Nine out of 10 respondents said the government has a responsibility to ensure the environment remains healthy. However, 27 per cent believe the province is doing a poor job of protecting it.

The research was conducted as part of the Suzuki Foundation's Blue Dot campaign, which has been pushing to add the right to a healthy environment into the country's Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

The change would give people the option to pursue legal actions if their environmental rights have been violated by, for example, polluting companies.

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Subway shutdowns

TRANSIT

TTC says weather to blame for three incidents

May Warren
Metro | Toronto

It was a horrible, no good, very bad Monday morning for hundreds of Toronto commuters, with three major subway shutdowns before noon.

And, we could be in store for more days like it if we don't start funding the TTC, advocates say.

Most of the chaos was caused by the same wire catching fire twice on Line 1, as melting snow fell from the bottom of subway cars and a ventilation shaft onto a poorly insulated wire.

TTC spokesman Stuart Green apologized to riders, calling the fire "an unusual event."

"This was a case of old wire and water that had pooled," he said, adding officials were planning to take a deeper look and make a more permanent fix Monday evening.

Asked if there could be other old wires at risk of catching fire, he said the TTC does regular inspections of the entire system.

But, he said, there's no way to make sure "that it will never happen again."

"Any incidents that occur, we always take any learnings we can away and make sure they're not repeated," he added.

A poorly insulated electrical cable that runs between Union and St. Andrew Stations caught fire twice on Monday morning, causing two of three major TTC delays. COURTESY TTC

> **What you get is what you pay for.**
> Jessica Bell

Jessica Bell, executive director of the transit advocacy group TTC riders, said these kinds of breakdowns and delays are what happens when transit is not properly funded.

Despite a 10-cent fare hike in 2017 and draining a $14.4-million reserve fund, the agency will be left with a funding gap of at least $61 million next year under the current proposed budget.

"What you get is what you pay for," said Bell, noting it was not an "extreme" amount of snow that shut service down.

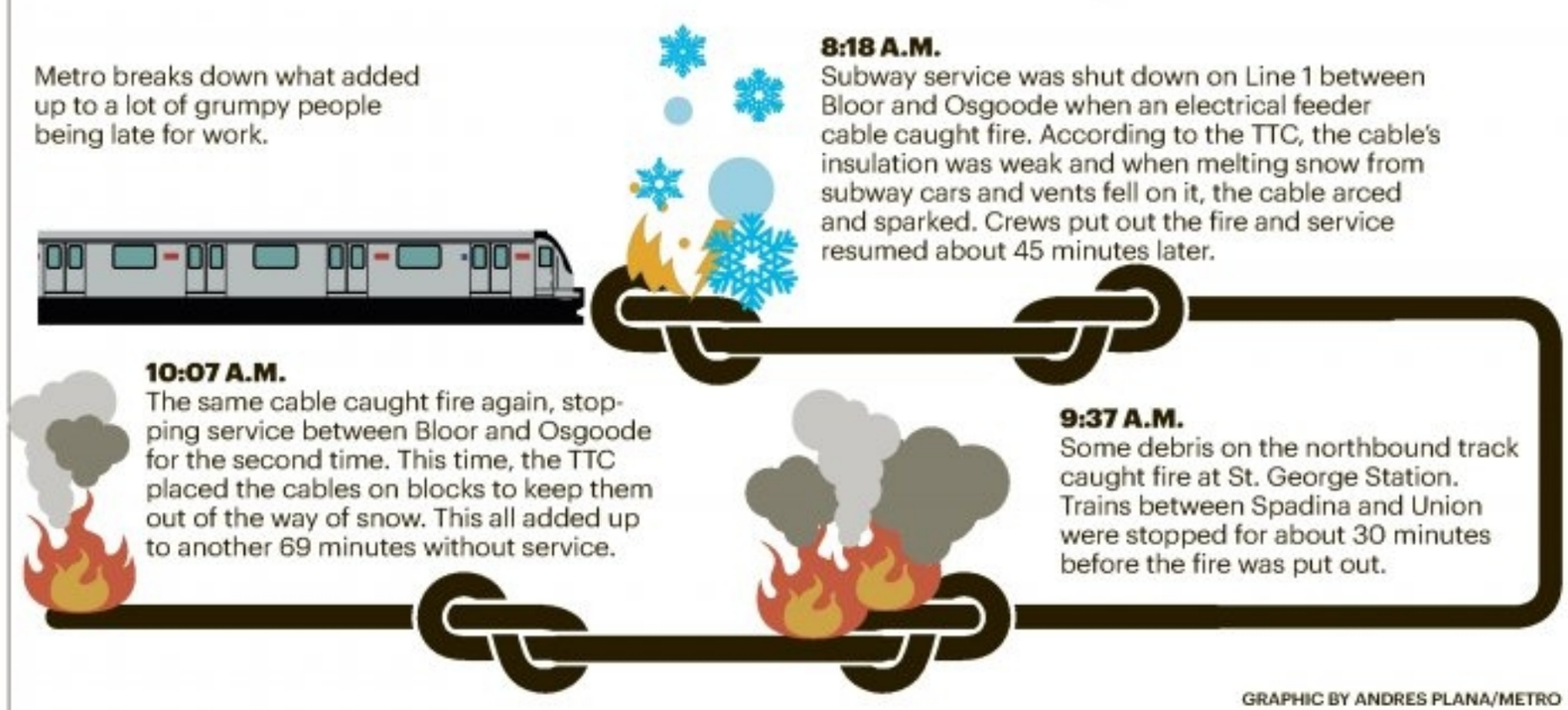
"The TTC should be absolutely prepared to deal with the first winter storm of the year," she added.

Gabriella Kalapos, executive director of the Clean Air Partnership, said the city needs to invest in public transit to make it more resilient to the extreme weather events that climate change will bring. Or, she said, we'll be seeing more miserable mornings.

"We have a lot of catching up to do to make sure our infrastructure's able to meet our present needs, never mind what the future holds for us," she said.

TIMELINE Anatomy of the TTC's Monday morning commuter hell

Metro breaks down what added up to a lot of grumpy people being late for work.


8:18 A.M.
Subway service was shut down on Line 1 between Bloor and Osgoode when an electrical feeder cable caught fire. According to the TTC, the cable's insulation was weak and when melting snow from subway cars and vents fell on it, the cable arced and sparked. Crews put out the fire and service resumed about 45 minutes later.
10:07 A.M.
The same cable caught fire again, stopping service between Bloor and Osgoode for the second time. This time, the TTC placed the cables on blocks to keep them out of the way of snow. This all added up to another 69 minutes without service.
9:37 A.M.
Some debris on the northbound track caught fire at St. George Station. Trains between Spadina and Union were stopped for about 30 minutes before the fire was put out.

GRAPHIC BY ANDRES PLANA/METRO

PRICING

Ontario bids to end travel sticker shock

No more hidden fees, no more fine print and no more sticker shock.

The Ontario government is making it illegal to advertise travel packages without including all of the taxes and fees in the price.

That means a week in the tropics advertised for $1,200 would have to actually cost $1,200 and not — as is currently the case — $1,200 with an asterisk denoting an additional $340 in levies for a $1,540 price tag.

Government and Consumer Services Minister Marie-France Lalonde is to announce Tuesday at Billy Bishop Airport that all-in pricing will take effect on Jan. 1.

While Ottawa introduced such measures on federally regulated airfares four years ago, package tours continued to be advertised without all of the charges included.

"We've all gone online to book travel and got a big surprise once we get to the payment page," Lalonde is to say, according to prepared remarks.

"The price we thought we were getting has changed significantly — and it is never lower," she is to say.

"We may have called a travel agent or company about a price we saw advertised in the newspaper — only to find that the price we saw is not the price we would have to pay."

Under the change, Ontario's nearly 2,500 travel agents and tour wholesalers will be required to display the total price for consumers in all of their promotional material — in print, online, and on radio and TV.

Lalonde believes the "consistent all-in pricing rules will reduce consumer confusion and make it simple, clear and easy to book travel."

The all-in pricing edict comes as the minister is reviewing the Travel Industry Act, which has not been updated since 2002 — long before the birth of such sharing-economy staples as Airbnb. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Mike Mallard's Christmas tree is a work in progress throughout the month of December. EDUARDO LIMA/METRO

Spreading good cheer

CHRISTMAS

Volunteer's community garden tree

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

Mike Mallard's Christmas just wouldn't be complete without a decorated tree.

Except, he can't put up a tree where he lives. It's against the rules at his rooming house near Dundas and George. "They say there's no room. I don't know about that," said Mallard.

But, regardless of the issue, Mallard's worked out a solution. Every December for the past three years, he's taken to decorating a small evergreen in a nearby community garden — spreading a bit of Christmas cheer to everyone who passes.

Mallard collects empty beer cans, returns them to the store and uses the deposit money to buy ornaments from the dollar store. He then visits the tree daily, adding decorations each time.

"I like to put a smile on someone's face," he said, noting kids from a nearby school and passersby often dole out compliments. "That's my way of giving back to the community. I don't have a stable job but I like to give 10 per cent of my time to the community."

It's a motto he lives by, volunteering his time at shelters and senior homes across the city.

Mallard's personal struggles have taught him to appreciate the little things. Diagnosed with hypoglycemia at a young age, he's been married and divorced four times and can't have kids. He worked in a warehouse until he hurt his back in a 1993 accident. It took him seven years to get back on his feet after surgery and he's still not fully recovered.

Growing up in Timmins, Mallard's family kept a Christmas tree lit until the dying days of winter. The little Dundas Street tree always reminds him of those days, and, especially, his 91-year-old mother Marjorie, who lives in North Bay.

"I know she has a tree up right now," Mallard said.

"I can't go visit her this Christmas, but at least I'm trying to keep that spirit going."

HOW TO HELP

Mallard would gladly accept ornaments — anyone can drop by Dundas and George streets and decorate the tree as they see fit.

BUSINESS

Rentals make for a greener Christmas

Alfredo and Marcelo Lorenzo are dreaming of a green Christmas.

It's nothing against snow, but the father-son duo who founded Mississauga reforestation company Sapling Life prefer the holiday with an eco-friendly hue. They offer a more environmentally conscious kind of festive decor: Christmas trees for rent.

"We want to change the status quo and the way we see Christmas trees," says Marcelo, 28, who operates Sapling Life from Washington, D.C., where they hope to expand the business.

The new company is part of a growing number of eco-friendly services devoted to potted-tree rentals. The business is touted as the eco-friendly alternative to fake trees made of plastic, which end up in landfills, and traditionally cut trees that can't be replanted.

Oakville native Jeff Ferguson and business partner Sean Macalister launched a tree rental business in 2009 out of Burnaby, B.C., called Evergrow Christmas Trees Co.

Ferguson had hoped the idea would catch on in the GTA. Today, live potted trees can be purchased at gardens across the GTA, including Sheridan Nurseries and the Lorenzos' Sapling Life, which has so far received 15 orders this season. For $85 to $174, the Sapling Life team will deliver the white spruce trees on Dec. 18 and pick them up on Jan. 1 for renting again next year, or for replanting across southern Ontario. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Alfredo Lorenzo with a potted tree at his Mississauga home. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Canadian refugee system in spotlight

CONFERENCE

Global experts to look at how settlement effort works

Ryan Tumilty
Metro | Ottawa

Kimberly Vandermeer leads Syrian refugee children in circle time activities during a playgroup organized by Ottawa Community Health Centres in Ottawa. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Experts from around the world are heading to Ottawa this week to see what Canada gets right on resettling refugees.

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is hosting a three-day conference from Tuesday to Thursday aiming to showcase Canada's private refugee sponsorship program.

That program allows Canadians to sponsor a refugee family coming to Canada.

University of Ottawa professor Jennifer Bond is among the organizers of the event. She said Canada's system is unique in the world and has a lot to offer.

"There have been a few very small-scale pilots in a couple of jurisdictions, but really Canada is the only country that has a big robust program," she said.

Representatives from Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Germany, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States are coming to the conference.

Bond said while any potential program would have to be tailored to the individual country, there is a lot to share here.

"What is common in many places around the world is compassion that lives in communities. I really think there are caring people all over the world who recognize the tragedy that is happening," she said.

She said with that base a private sponsorship program could be tailored for any one of these countries.

"It's not about taking Canada's model and just plunking it somewhere else, it's very much about taking the expertise that Canada has to offer," she said.

Bond said while some politicians around the world have had negative things to say about refugee resettlement, it's nice to see so many countries interested in the Canadian model.

"In a space that does feel a little bit dark these days this initiative does offer some hope," she said.

The initiative is led by the government of Canada, but also has participation from the University of Ottawa, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and several foundations.

HEALTH CARE

Feds simplifying safe-injection sites

The federal Liberals are streamlining the process to allow communities to apply to set up supervised injection sites quicker, with less red tape and with less room for community objections.

Health Minister Jane Philpott introduced the bill that would clear out a long list of regulations and conditions for establishing sites that the previous Conservative government introduced.

Those conditions included a requirement to have the approval of a community's council and its police chief. In Ottawa, both Mayor Jim Watson and Ottawa police Chief Charles Bordeleau have indicated they don't support an injection site.

Philpott said the changes are necessary to deal with a public health crisis that is only growing.

"We need to take swift action on the opioid crisis to save lives. We need a renewed focus on harm reduction," she said.

RYAN TUMILTY/METRO

Rail crew saves cold cat

Jeremy Simes
Metro | Edmonton

Q the cat

A nearly frozen tabby cat and a "burly man with a beard," fell in love Sunday after two train drivers found the frozen feline under their engine deck in Wainwright, Alta.

Train engineer William Munsey and conductor Brad Slater were working a chilly Sunday morning when they had to drive the Q199 CN train from Wainwright to Edmonton. Temperatures were nearly –40 C.

The drivers had to inspect trains in the rail yard and Slater left to inspect the train's engines, but he found something out of the ordinary: He came across a grey tabby, frozen solid. Slater wrapped the cat in his shirt and, after an hour of howling meows, the grey tabby curled up in his lap and purred. The feline , since named "Q," then gladly ate some beef jerky.

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Aleppo situation is 'very critical'

SYRIA

Ban Ki-moon warns against 'atrocities'

Syrians flee towards safer areas in Aleppo on Monday during government forces' efforts to retake the city. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

United Nations secretary-general Ban Ki-moon has expressed alarm over "atrocities against a large number of civilians, including women and children, in recent hours in Aleppo."

Syrian rebels retreated from former strongholds in eastern Aleppo in a "terrifying" collapse Monday, holding onto a small sliver of territory packed with fighters and thousands of civilians as government troops pressed on with their rapid advance.

The Syrian military said it had gained control of 99 per cent of the former opposition enclave in eastern Aleppo, signalling an impending end to the rebels' four-year hold over parts of the city as the final hours of battle played out.

"The situation is very, very critical," said Ibrahim al-Haj of the Syrian Civil Defence, volunteer first responders who operate in rebel-held areas. He said he was seeking shelter for himself and his family, fearing clashes or capture by the government.

Retaking Aleppo, which has been divided between rebel- and government-controlled zones since 2012, would be President Bashar Assad's biggest victory in the country's civil war. But it does not end the conflict: Significant parts of Syria are still outside government control and huge swaths of the country are a devastated waste-land.

Ban urged all parties on the ground "to protect civilians and abide by international humanitarian and human rights law."

METRO/WITH FILES FROM THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WORLD NEWS

Terminally ill 5-year-old boy dies in Santa's arms

A Tennessee Santa Claus says a terminally ill five-year-old boy died in his arms after he gave the child a present in the hospital. Eric Schmitt-Matzen, who does about 80 events a year as Santa, was asked a few weeks ago to visit the dying boy. Schmitt-Matzen says he gave the child a toy. He says the boy gave him a big hug, asked "Santa, can you help me?" and died in his arms. Schmitt-Matzen says it took him days to recover, but he's continuing to play Santa. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Venezuela seizes millions of toys to give to poor kids

Venezuela's government has seized nearly 4 million toys from a private company and says it will hand them out as Christmas gifts to poor children this holiday season. The country's fair pricing authority seized the toys Friday from three warehouses run by Kreisel, Venezuela's largest toy distributor. Two executives were detained on suspicion of price speculation. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Tuesday, December 13, 2016

CHANTAL HÉBERT ON TRUDEAU'S YEAR-END PRESSER

It can't have come as a surprise to the prime minister that while he was asked what he regretted about his first full year in office, he was not queried about what he believes were his successes.

Justin Trudeau would not be human if he had not wished the year-end news conference he gave on Monday on Parliament Hill to provide him — in the spirit of the upcoming holiday season — with an opportunity to celebrate the many missions he believes his government accomplished in 2016.

But he would not be where he is today if he still believed in Santa Claus. And so it can't have come as a surprise to the prime minister that while he was asked what, if anything, he regretted most about his first full year in office, he was not similarly queried about what he believes was his greatest success.

For the record, Trudeau said the execution in the Philippines of two Canadians held hostage for ransom by Islamic extremists had made for his darkest hours as prime minister. A less introvert Stephen Harper would have answered along the same lines. The responsibility to make life-and-death decisions is one that no prime minister takes lightly.

On the plus side, Trudeau might have liked to bask a little longer in the afterglow of the climate pact ratified Friday by 11 of Canada's 13 provincial and territorial governments. After all, when Canada signed the Paris climate accord a year ago, many commentators doubted the capacity of the rookie government to do the heavy lifting required to translate talk into concerted federal-provincial action.

The Liberals have seemed both blindsided by and blind to the perception that the PM is being elastic in his interpretation of his own ethical rules.

IN A REFLECTIVE MOOD Prime Minister Justin Trudeau speaks at his year-in-review press conference at the National Press Theatre in Ottawa on Monday. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

But it is the nature of politics that one crisis chases another and so three items of unfinished but time-sensitive business took precedence:

1) More so than climate change, health-care funding has been an apple of discord between Trudeau and the premiers. It was initially Harper who decreed that as of next year the annual increase of the federal health transfer would fall to 3 per cent from 6 per cent. Ever since Trudeau made that Conservative decision his own, the provinces have been crying foul.

The issue was the main topic of the dinner Trudeau hosted for the premiers Friday night. On Monday, the prime minister said he expected a resolution of the matter before the holidays. The relative radio silence that has attended the aftermath of the first ministers' dinner suggests a compromise designed to allow everyone to save face is in the works.

2) On electoral reform and Trudeau's promise of a new voting system in time for the 2019 election, the Liberals have ended up tangled in a web of their own weaving. Monday, the prime minister professed excitement about the ongoing government's online consultation — the one that almost everyone else has talked about for the wrong reasons. The exercise's main claim to fame is to have inspired parodies in both official languages.

Over the past six months, much of the intellectual energy of the top levels of the government has been focused on the dual issues of pipelines and climate change — at some cost to lesser files. If there is a point to Trudeau's latest contribution to this comedy of errors, it may be to buy the Liberals time so as to regroup and figure out where to go from the current electoral reform quagmire between now and when the House resumes in late January.

3) Political financing, finally, was never meant to be on the Liberal radar and its appearance has not been good news for the government. It has seemed both blindsided by and blind to the widespread public perception that the prime minister is being elastic in his interpretation of his own ethical rules when he allows his party to trade access to himself and his cabinet for donations.

Based on Trudeau's news conference, that blindness starts at the very top. On Monday, the prime minister said donors did use the access their money bought to lobby him but that it had no impact on his decisions. He compared chatting with donors at exclusive private events to the hosts of closed-doors meetings he holds with municipal politicians and/or community organizations.

Trudeau sees a parallel between the discussions he has with representatives of other levels of governments, such as the premiers he spent the day with on Friday and well-heeled contributors to his party's coffers. At this rate, he will soon be reassuring his provincial counterparts that he does not hold it against them that they get to spend quality time with him free of charge. After all, time is money in Liberal land.

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer.

Keep your hands off our highways, Patrick

TORY'S TORONTO
Matt Elliott

Ontario Progressive Conservative leader Patrick Brown made it clear last week: he really, really doesn't like Mayor John Tory's plan to put road tolls on the Gardiner Expressway and the Don Valley Parkway.

But I've got no time for Brown's opinion on this, and neither should you.

Why? Let's count the reasons.

First, for all of Brown's agitations against highway tolls, he has yet to suggest a workable alternative for funding Toronto transit.

He didn't promise to increase the provincial operating subsidy to the TTC. He didn't promise to kick in a few billion dollars for the badly-needed relief line subway.

Instead, he pointed to a recent auditor general report outlining some Liberal government screw-ups, suggesting that there'd be money for transit had these mistakes not been made. But those screw-ups, while frustrating, are in the past and don't add up to anywhere near enough money to provide predictable, sustainable long-term transit funding.

Second, one of the messages the PC party is using to oppose tolls is out of step with reality. Their anti-toll petition website suggests tolls on the Gardiner and DVP are unnecessary because "we've already paid for these roads."

That's got to be news to every single person at Toronto city hall, many of whom have been working on a $3.6 billion rehabilitation plan for the Gardiner. Over the next few decades, whole pieces of the highway need to be replaced.

That doesn't sound like a road that's been paid for.

Third, even though it's been two decades since the PC party under Premier Mike Harris nearly destroyed the TTC, I still find it hard to give much transit credibility to the party who nearly destroyed the TTC.

If Brown wants to be seen as someone Toronto can trust on transit, here's a good first step: acknowledge that Harris' cut to the TTC operating subsidy and the decision to fill in an under-construction subway tunnel on Eglinton were mistakes.

Fourth, consider this: even if you're ready to curse Tory's name for his toll plan — and I have my own misgivings — do you really think the city shouldn't have the autonomy as a mature level of government to decide whether or not to toll its highways?

The notion that Toronto — a government larger than all but four provinces — should have to ask Queen's Park permission to raise revenue using city-owned assets is absurd.

It stems from the paternalistic idea that cities aren't capable of governing themselves.

That's the biggest problem I have with Brown's anti-toll act. It's not enough that provincial politicians have refused to fix Toronto's transit funding imbalance — now some of them want to stand in the way of Toronto's plan to try to fix things on our own.

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Tuesday, December 13, 2016

Far too many people in television provide a safe space for politicians instead of pushing back and saying 'you didn't answer this question.'
CNN's Jake Tapper is making it his signature to show pit bull-like tendencies when an interview subject avoids a question.

Neuroscience explains why we fall

Elderly are at risk when their brains work especially hard during ordinary tasks, new research finds

Subtle changes in older people's brain activity may increase the risk of falls by as much as 32 per cent, according to a new medical research paper. ISTOCK

Genna Buck
Metro Canada

Vivian Kong knows first-hand how an elderly person's world can shrink after a serious fall.

Her grandfather has been using a cane since he slipped in a parking lot several years back, but it was his latest fall, about two years ago, that really affected his independence.

"He now lives in assisted living — he had his own apartment for years — doesn't use transit anymore, and because doctors don't know why his most recent fall happened, he now owns a scooter and uses a cane," says Kong, 26, of Toronto.

Falls affect one in three Canadians over 65 every year, account for more seniors' hospitalizations than any other injury, and cost about $2 billion annually, according to the Public Health Agency of Canada.

A new study has shed some light on why so many of those falls, like Kong's grandfather's, go unexplained.

Subtle changes in older people's brain activity — impossible to measure directly without expensive imaging equipment — may increase the risk of falls by as much as 32 per cent, according to a new paper in the journal Neurology.

And the changes begin years before doctors and family members can spot any outward signs of trouble.

The 166 seniors (average age 75) in the study had no disabilities, dementia or gait problems. They were hooked up to a machine that monitored activity of the prefrontal cortex; the decision-making part of the brain.

Then they were asked to do tasks such as walking and reciting every other letter of the alphabet at the same time.

The people whose brains were working especially hard during that particular task, possibly to compensate for mild cognitive decline, were much more likely to suffer a fall over the next four years. The result remained even after researchers controlled for other risk factors.

These findings are important because care providers could be missing some people who are at risk, said Matt Aymar, knowledge translation coordinator at the injury-prevention organization Parachute.

"Because doctors don't know why his most recent fall happened, he now owns a scooter and uses a cane."
Vivian Kong, 26, whose grandfather now lives in assisted living after a bad fall

"My initial reaction was wow," Aymar said. "Here is a warning sign, and it's coming a little earlier down the road."

Someone who can pass a typical screening test with ease — get out of a chair, walk three meters, turn around and walk back with a normal gait — might be "using more brain than their friends" to do it, Aymar said.

More research is needed to learn the underlying causes of falls, so new interventions can be designed, he added. "We could really benefit from more prevention. It will save society a lot of money and give older adults vitality they deserve as much as anybody else."

A fall, especially accompanied by a broken hip, is often the "slippery slope" to a steep decline, Aymar said.

According to Hamilton, Ont. occupational therapist Kayla McDowell, "Sometimes something as simple as a fall in the bathroom can really devastate someone's world."

"Adult children who work full-time and have families are often relied upon to pick up pieces like meal prep, laundry, and, depending on the severity of the injury from the fall, even things like toileting. This puts a lot of pressure on families and individuals," she said.

Kong's family has been relatively lucky in that regard.

"(My grandfather's) English isn't very good, so there are limited (medical) resources, but he's still pretty independent. He goes out with seniors' groups, and finds Chinese-speaking taxi drivers to take him places. He just moves a lot more slowly and my parents fuss over him a lot more."

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Struggling to pay for mental health

DEPRESSION

Sufferers find it difficult to navigate health system

Keith Bundock isn't sure when his life started falling apart.

He might've been 35, or maybe 40. During that time, his marriage was breaking down and his church was closing up. His support network was suddenly gone, and he was having odd, unsettling feelings of fogginess and confusion.

Even stranger, though, was that Bundock often didn't feel much at all.

It wasn't until a suicide attempt left him in a psychiatric ward that the east-end resident learned what was really going on: He was coping with severe chronic depression.

"Looking back, I can see little flashes of it throughout life — I didn't understand it," Bundock, now 53, recalls. "I didn't associate what I was feeling with a mental illness."

Once Bundock was diagnosed, he faced a new challenge: To get the treatment he needed, he had to navigate Ontario's complex mental health care system.

With long wait times and an array of services available from different types of care providers, figuring out where to turn — and where to start — can be tricky when it comes to mental health care, experts say. There's also a cost element, and determining how to pay for care is often another challenge for people coping with mental health issues, says the Canadian Mental Health Association.

Indeed, people often don't know how to navigate Ontario's "bewildering" mental health care system, says psychiatrist Dr. David S. Goldbloom, senior medical adviser at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. "And it's probably a misnomer to call it a system, because that would suggest an organization of networks, and that's not the case."

Bundock agrees.

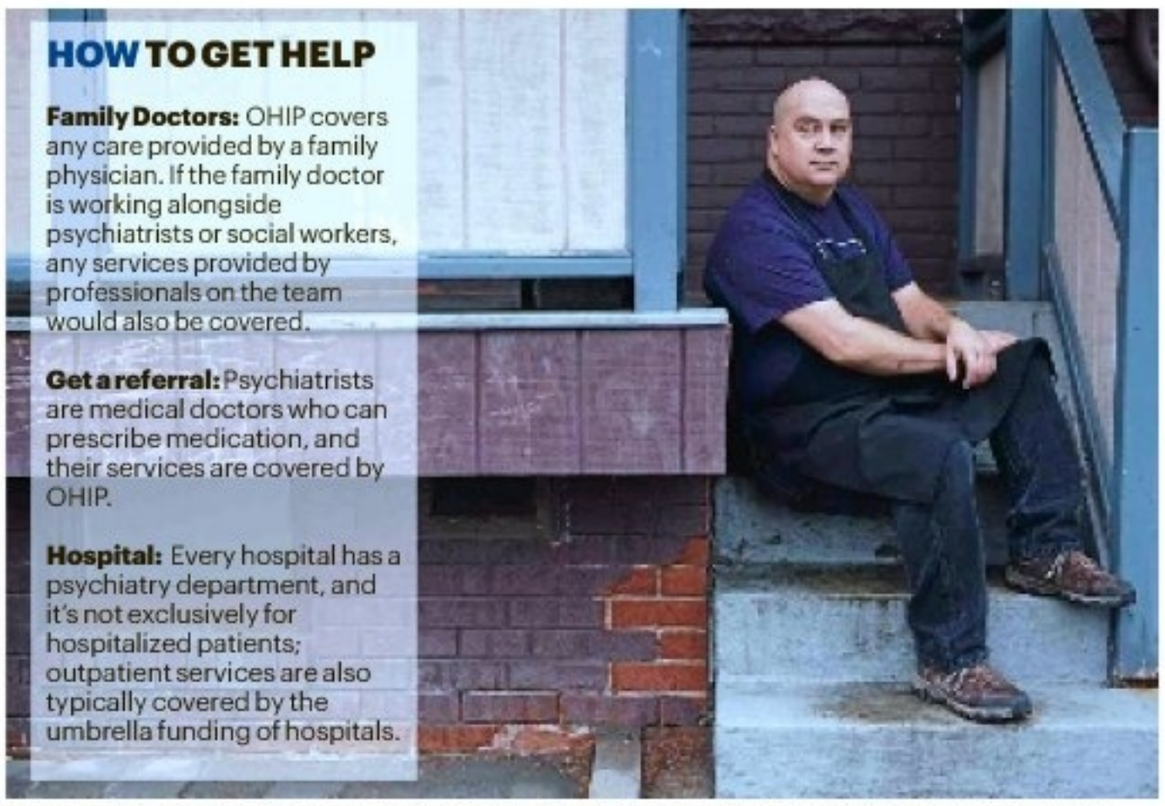
"Entry into the system can be, at best, a bit of a shock," he says recalling his experience. "It's not smooth and it's not clear … we don't know what our own needs are when we enter."

HOW TO GET HELP

Family Doctors: OHIP covers any care provided by a family physician. If the family doctor is working alongside psychiatrists or social workers, any services provided by professionals on the team would also be covered.

Get a referral: Psychiatrists are medical doctors who can prescribe medication, and their services are covered by OHIP.

Hospital: Every hospital has a psychiatry department, and it's not exclusively for hospitalized patients; outpatient services are also typically covered by the umbrella funding of hospitals.



Keith Bundock now gives back to the Canadian Mental Health Association by volunteering with the group who helped him through severe chronic depression. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

For Bundock, being put into contact with a social worker at CMHA was a huge help.

"She was able to walk with me and explore things and was one of those people that would bring things to me that I didn't know were out there," he said.

The social worker helped Bundock access disability support as he underwent treatment with a physician.

"It took several years before I could get by without medication," he says. "I learned the signs of what was leading me to depression."

That support from his social worker was integral as Bundock began to rebuild his life. He moved into a rooming house and eventually took out a student loan to obtain a culinary degree from George Brown College.

> **"It's probably a misnomer to call it a system, because that would suggest an organization of networks, and that's not the case.**
>
> Dr. David S. Goldbloom, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

He's now working full-time running a food program, and volunteers at CMHA — his way of giving back to the organization that helped him stay afloat during one of the darkest times of his life.

"I volunteer to help people who are in the same place I was," he says. TORTSAR NEWS SERVICE

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La La Land struts into awards season

NOMINATIONS

Musical leads way with seven Golden Globe nominations

Damien Chazelle's Los Angeles musical La La Land sang and danced its way to a leading seven Golden Globes nominations, with Barry Jenkins' celebrated coming-of-age tale Moonlight close on its heels with six nods.

La La Land earned nominations for its lead actors, Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling, as well best picture, comedy or musical. The film also scored nominations for directing, screenplay, score and original song in the nominations announced Monday in Los Angeles by the Hollywood Foreign Press Assocation.

Moonlight led the field in the dramatic categories, including best picture. It earned nods for Jenkins' directing and script, supporting actor favourite Mahershala Ali and supporting actress Naomie Harris.

Emma Stone has already won a raft of film awards for her leading role in Los Angeles musical La La Land. CONTRIBUTED

The other nominees for best picture, drama, were Manchester by the Sea, Lion, Hell or High Water and Mel Gibson's Hacksaw Ridge.

The film nominations also verified that this year's awards season isn't nearly so white as last year's. Along with Moonlight, nominations were heaped on Denzel Washington's August Wilson adaptation Fences (including acting nods for Washington and Viola Davis) and the interracial marriage drama Loving (leads Ruth Negga and Joel Edgerton were each nominated).

Ryan Reynolds joined fellow Canadian Gosling in the actor, musical or comedy category for his leading role in R-rated Marvel hit Deadpool.

In a sign of Hollywood's increasing dichotomy between mega blockbusters and smaller independent films, the lead nominee getters were overwhelmingly independent. Lionsgate led the way with 10 nods thanks largely to La La Land.

The indie outfit A24, producer of Moonlight, followed with nine. Amazon Studios, which is distributing Manchester by the Sea, outranked goliaths like the Walt Disney Co. (three) and Warner Bros. (just one).

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CELEBS FOR A CAUSE

Reynolds salutes SickKids

Canadian actor Ryan Reynolds dedicated his award at the 22nd annual Critics' Choice Awards to the Toronto's SickKids Foundation and Make-a-Wish foundation.

"Deadpool was an 11-year-odyssey for me," said Reynolds. "The character had cancer and some of the people that this character resonated with were sick kids. So I would like to dedicate this honour to Make-a-Wish foundation and the SickKids Foundation of Toronto."

Reynolds dedicated his award in memory of two children, Connor McGrath and Grace Bowen (pictured). "They didn't lose the battle...they started a fight." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

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THE SHOW: Hairspray Live! (NBC/City)
THE MOMENT: "I Know Where I've Been"

Jennifer Hudson as motormouth Maybelle. JUSTIN LUBIN/NBC

In 1962 Baltimore, teenagers love the American Bandstand-like Corny Collins Show, but only white kids can appear on it. Tracy Turnblad (Maddie Baillio) wants to integrate it, but some kids at Motormouth Maybelle's (Jennifer Hudson) record shop question her intentions.

"Tracy, was it about being famous?" Maybelle asks. "Was it about the boy? The dancing?"

"It was about dancing together," Tracy says. "I think it's wrong when we can't."

"Children. My children," Maybelle says. "What do we do when something is wrong? We fix it."

She launches into an impassioned anthem about the fight for equality: "There's a road we've been traveling/Lost so many on the way…There's a dream in the future/There's a struggle yet to win…But I know where I'm going/And I know where I've been."

This is the emotional high point of the musical, and it's a good one. In Hudson's American Idol days, she was a screamer, but she has more control now, and she can really belt. Hearing her sing live gave the number an extra urgency.

But as the lump was rising in my throat, the production cut away: to the crowd watching; to the inane commentary of the host; to the actors scurrying to their next set.

Live TV is a hoot, and these musicals have quickly become a welcome holiday tradition. But the behind-the-scenes hijinks are too disruptive. I wish the producers would cut together a cute "Here's how they did it" featurette to run after the curtain calls, instead of ruining the magic they've just made.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

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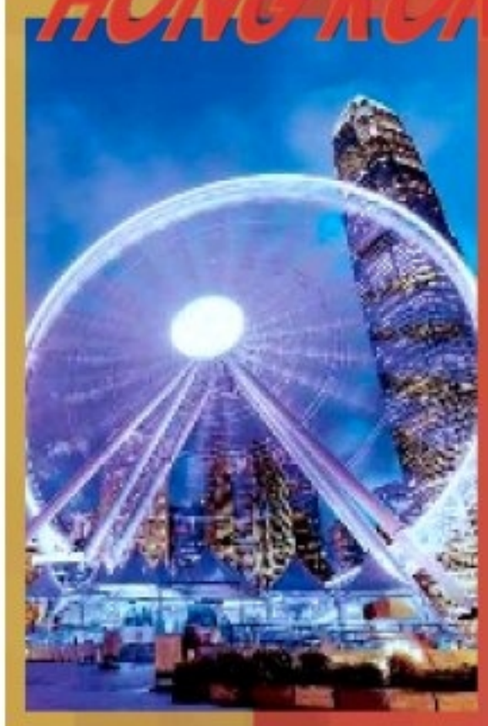

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Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James, shown with his daughter Zhurie, is backing an HBO doc on Muhammad Ali. AP FILE PHOTO

LeBron James backs Ali doc

TELEVISION

Basketball star exec produces multi-part film on boxing icon

King James is set to tell the story of The Greatest.

Cleveland Cavaliers star LeBron James will be the executive producer of an HBO documentary on Muhammad Ali, who died earlier this year. The as-yet-untitled film will be directed by Antoine Fuqua, who also helmed the boxing drama Southpaw and Training Day. Fuqua will also produce.

James has been a longtime admirer of Ali, the boxing great and social activist. James recently pledged a $2.5 donation to a new exhibit on Ali at the Smithsonian Institution.

"He transcended sports and used his platform to empower people, which paved the way for all athletes and people of every race and gender that came after him, myself included," he said. James' SpringHill Entertainment, which he co-founded with business partner and close friend Maverick Carter, will produce the multipart film. HBO says the documentary will "explore Ali's greatest triumphs and comebacks, painting an intimate portrait of a man who, against all odds, dreamed and achieved the impossible, over and over again."

HBO said it will combine archival footage with cinematic recreations to tell Ali's story.

Ali died June 3 at the age of 74.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

STAR METRO SPONSORED CONTENT — RBC

12 days of giving

What would you do with an extra $150 in your pocket at this time of year? Buy a well-deserved gift for yourself? Treat the kids to a day of snowboarding? Thanks to RBC, youth across the country are happily giving that $150 away.

Inspired by the ideas select young Canadians came up with for RBC's #Make150Count campaign, RBC has created the 12 Days of Giving. #Make150Count — a nod to Canada's big birthday next year — offers youth between ages 16 and 25 $150 to make a difference in their communities.

Since the campaign launched in October, young Canadians have come up with hundreds of inspirational ideas and acted upon them, says Mary DePaoli, RBC's chief brand and communications officer. She mentions one young girl, Melissa, a patient at SickKids, who used her $150 to buy games and books for the waiting room in the oncology department. Melissa's dad matched the $150 so she could buy additional Tim Hortons gift cards for parents of newly diagnosed cancer patients.

Another participant, Harleen, handed out flowers and kind notes to strangers around her University of Victoria campus. Janine from Edmonton filled up five large shoe boxes with toys, books and personal care items to be sent to kids in underprivileged parts of the world. Torontonian Jai used the money to make gift bags for the homeless, filled with scarves, hats, mitts and socks with a handwritten note wishing them happy holidays. And Ryan from Halifax treated three teens from the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre to a day of surfing lessons, building confidence and friendships.

Beginning today and throughout the next 12 Days of Giving, RBC will be using Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to share some of these inspirational stories from the #Make150Count recipients. Search #Make150Count to see a new one each day.

RBC hopes these ideas will encourage others to give, share and provide comfort this holiday season. "This campaign taps into the goodness within all of us and proves that when we invest in youth, great things can happen," says DePaoli.

Tell us how you will #Make150Count and give back over the holidays, and stay tuned for a special celebration of the projects and people on Canada Day.

In the meantime, RBC is thrilled to see young Canadians doing so much to help their communities prosper, as well as inspiring young and old during the holidays.

How to get started

To kick off the 12 Days of Giving, here are a few suggestions to get started:

- *Perform a random act of kindness*
- *Help the homeless*
- *Give the gift of adventure*
- *Donate to a charity*
- *Collect essential items for a food bank*
- *Organize a community gathering or activity*
- *Pay it forward*
- *Spend time with a senior*
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metro SPORTS

The NHL's best team so far in one-goal games? The surging Calgary Flames, who boast a 10-1-2 mark

The Raptors' Mr. Efficient

NBA

Powell a regular contributor despite erratic playing time

The luxury that is Norman Powell is not something all NBA teams have, and that makes him especially valuable to the Toronto Raptors. The second-year forward is versatile and willing to wait for his opportunities, and his impact when he gets the chance to play is substantial.

Toronto coach Dwane Casey would love to be able to use him more often and thankful that he knows what he'll get when Powell's name is called.

"Always," the coach said. "I wish we could find more minutes for him."

But what Casey wishes and what is reality are two entirely different things at the moment. Powell is behind starter DeMarre Carroll and primary backup Terrence Ross and there's not any more room for a third wing on a team that always employs Kyle Lowry, DeMar DeRozan and Cory Joseph in the backcourt roles.

Blame president Masai Ujiri, if you will, because he has loaded the roster with capable players and left the coach to figure out when to play them.

"Here it's a case of Masai and Jeff (Weltman, the team's general manager) doing a good job of putting the roster pieces together," Casey said. "That's what you want in your program, where your roster is equal like that and you have competition at every position. I know in Dallas when we won a championship we were that way, and also in Seattle. On all the good teams that I have been around, we have had that guy or those two guys who could step in at any moment and take up the minutes."

Powell's usage has been all over the map in Toronto's 23 games before Monday's contest at the Milwaukee Bucks.

He has had five starts — all when Carroll was resting with the Raptors playing on consecutive nights — and has averaged more than 30 minutes in those games, including a season-high 36 in Boston on Friday.

14.9

The number of minutes Powell was averaging prior to Monday night.

His last two starts have been tremendous, 20 points and five steals against the Celtics, 16 points and seven rebounds in a win over the Los Angeles Lakers.

But he's also had four games where he hasn't played a second, three where he's played less than three minutes of mop-up time and five others where he's been on the court for fewer than 10 minutes.

"It's tough," Powell said last week, "but when I get my minutes, no matter how many minutes it is, go in there and show that I can play and show I can have an impact and they can call my name."

Ujiri may find a way to leverage all his talent into something else nearer February's trade deadline but that's still months off for Powell to wait for minutes when they come up.

"You don't want to go outside of what the team needs me to do and what I need to do and what it takes for us to win," Powell said. "I'm not going to go out there and do anything different, (I'll) play my role depending on if I'm in there with the starting unit, the second unit. Just play my game and play with confidence. The ball is going to find you if you're playing the game correctly."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Norman Powell of the Raptors runs over the Celtics' Marcus Smart on his way to the basket in Boston on Friday. WINSLOW TOWNSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TORONTO FC

Irwin among draft eligible

The dust has hardly settled on Toronto FC's MLS Cup final loss to the Seattle Sounders, but decisions for 2017 are already being made.

The Reds announced the 11 players they would protect for Tuesday's expansion draft, when new franchises in Minnesota and Atlanta select five players each from a pool of 259 players. Toronto can not lose more than one player.

Among the players left exposed are goalkeeper Clint Irwin, defender Steven Beitashour and midfielder Will Johnson, off-season pickups a year ago who were key to honing a winning culture at the once-maligned club.

> **"I hope none of these guys leave. I hope they all stay here."**
>
> **Drew Moor**

"When you bring these guys in and you see how they act in practice, they never want to lose," midfielder Jonathan Osorio said last week. "The other guys see that and it's just contagious. (A winning mentality) starts from them coming in and everyone else just learning that and breathing that in, day in, and day out."

Defender Drew Moor, another key acquisition last year, believes a successful off-season is about more than bringing in talent.

"You look at myself, Will Johnson, Steven Beitashour; there are some MLS Cups in there, there are some Supporters Shields in there. People that understand the grinds of (Major League Soccer), people that understand what it takes to win," he said.

"That's not saying we're personally all great players. That's saying we've been through it before and we understand the culture and we've been in a locker-room that's been successful."

Midfielder Benoit Cheyrou and forward Tosaint Ricketts are also eligible to be selected Tuesday. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

DeRozan, Ross lead the way in romp over Bucks

Raptors guard Cory Joseph is fouled by the Bucks Malcolm Brogdon on Monday night. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

DeMar DeRozan had 30 points, and Terrence Ross added 25 as the Toronto Raptors beat the Milwaukee Bucks 122-100 on Monday.

The victory was Toronto's third straight, and ninth in their past 10 games.

Kyle Lowry had 18 points and seven assists for the Raptors (17-7), while DeMarre Carroll had 13 points, and Jonas Valanciunas finished with 11 points and a game-high 13 rebounds.

Giannis Antetokounmpo scored 30 points to top the Bucks (11-12).

The Raptors, who were coming off a 101-94 win in Boston that saw them claw back from a 14-point deficit, looked poised for an easy victory over the Bucks, cruising to a 26-point advantage before the first half was over.

MONDAY At ACC

122	100
RAPTORS	BUCKS

But a sloppy third-quarter saw the Bucks cut the deficit to 10 points — and an irate Raptors coach Dwane Casey pace the sidelines in frustration.

Toronto led 92-82 to start the fourth quarter, and then Ross almost single-handedly wrested the game from the Bucks' grasp. Ross hit Toronto's first four buckets, including a pair of three-pointers that put the Raptors back up by 20 points in barely three minutes.

The Raptors shot 50 per cent on the night and 54 per cent from three-point range, while the Bucks went just 4-for-23 from long range.

The Raptors are in Philadelphia to face the 76ers on Wednesday, and return home to host the Atlanta Hawks on Friday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Dak Prescott, left, was sacked three times and threw two interceptions in Sunday's loss to the Giants. ELSA/GETTY IMAGES

Dallas' Achilles heel exposed by Giants

NFL

Cowboys' win streak halted by New York's physicality

Maybe instead of looking at what the Cowboys have been doing to the rest of the league, NFL teams should look at what the Giants did to the Cowboys this season.

And who knows, maybe what New York could do again should they meet in the playoffs. Dallas' offence ripped through nearly every opponent during an 11-game winning streak that began after a 20-19 home loss to New York in the season opener.

That string ended under the powerful pressure the Giants applied on defence Sunday night: a strong pass rush; sticky coverage of the Cowboys' star receivers, Dez Bryant and tight end Jason Witten; and three takeaways. Tampa Bay, Detroit and Philadelphia, the Cowboys' final three opponents, surely will take note.

The Cowboys have put their stamp on victories all year by jumping to leads and pounding opponents with sensational rookie running back Ezekiel Elliott. Dak Prescott has made all the right decisions and plenty of big plays. The defence has been far less dynamic, but not a liability.

That formula earned them the league's first playoff spot last week and could have gotten them a first-round bye with a victory over the Giants at MetLife Stadium. Except the formula got squished by the Giants, 10-7.

> **We're not going to let this do anything but improve us.**
> Cowboys owner Jerry Jones

While there's no reason to panic in Big D, the Cowboys' main public speaker, owner Jerry Jones, hoped the loss would provide a cautionary tale. "As a team, we will react to this loss against a physical Giants team and get better," Jones said. "We're not going to let this do anything but improve us.

"I like our players' tools. We were inconsistent tonight. I'm giving the Giants the credit for creating that inconsistency."

Jones smiled when the inevitable question came of whether Tony Romo's role will change after Prescott struggled mightily in the Meadowlands. Dallas went an abysmal 1 for 15 on third downs and gained a season-low 260 yards.

"No," he said with emphasis.

Although the Cowboys have a big lead in the NFC with three games remaining, Jones knows they are treading a thin line when relying on rookies as major contributors. Of course, Elliott and Prescott appear to be special rookies.

He was careful to praise the Giants and then emphasize the good elements he saw from his team. All of those, given the score, were on defence.

"We played a well-coached team and effective team out there," Jones said. "A lot of the credit goes to the Giants for what we didn't do offensively like we needed to do. They had a good way to defend us, and they did. I thought our defence played as well as I have seen them play this year. That's encouraging."

And he was quick to restate his unwavering confidence in the kids. "These guys are sound," Jones said. "We're proud of our guys. We've seen Dak have a bad series or what I'd call challenging series and come back and right the ship. We have no expectations that he won't come back. I like our players' tools."

As he should. They are, after all, 11-2 and likely to earn the top seed in the conference. They are, at the very least, a leading contender to reach their first Super Bowl since that other JJ (Jimmy Johnson) built a squad that Barry Switzer coached to the 1995 NFL title

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Cristiano Ronaldo, centre, trains with his Real Madrid teammates in Yokohama, Japan, on Monday ahead of the FIFA Club World Cup. KOJI SASAHARA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SOCCER

Ronaldo takes turn with Ballon d'Or

After giving a European Championship title to Portugal and another Champions League trophy to Real Madrid, Cristiano Ronaldo ends 2016 with something just for himself — his fourth world player of the year award.

Ronaldo on Monday won his third Ballon d'Or award, which this year is being handed out by France Football magazine separately from FIFA. Ronaldo also took home the Ballon d'Or prize in 2013 and 2014, and the FIFA award in 2008 while still playing for Manchester United.

The Portugal forward is also in contention for FIFA's prize this year, along with Lionel Messi and Antoine Griezmann, who finished second and third to Ronaldo on Monday, respectively.

"This was likely the best year of my career, individually and collectively," Ronaldo said in a pre-recorded video. "It was unforgettable."

Only Ronaldo and Messi have been voted the best in the world since 2007, when Kaka won the prize. Messi won a record fifth award last year.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Doping coverup 'disgrace'

WADA INVESTIGATION

Emails show Russian officials' mass concealment

Russia's doping coverup went far beyond the Olympics, according to a vast archive of emails released by a World Anti-Doping Agency investigator.

Besides the 12 medal winners from the 2014 Winter Olympics whose samples were supposedly tampered with, messages show a system which covered up drug use by blind athletes and children as young as 15.

In 2015, a year after the Olympics, Russia's top doping scientist, Grigory Rodchenkov, complained that the scheme Richard McLaren termed the "disappearing positive methodology" had grown so large it was covering for doping — and apparent abuse of power — in disabled sports.

Five blind athletes in powerlifting had tested positive for the banned steroid methandienone at the same training camp. Rodchenkov suspected unscrupulous coaches eager for medals were doping the athletes without their knowledge.

"It's a disgrace," Rodchenkov wrote to Alexei Velikodny of Russian state's Sports Training Center. The coaches were "picking on the blind (who) can't even see what people are giving them."

A year earlier, the records show Velikodny issuing a "save" order for a 15-year-old competitor in track and field — the instruction which meant a failed test was reported as negative.

The young athlete — one of the most promising juniors in Russia at the time — was flagged as a "Crimean athlete" in the emails, a distinction which may have helped him avoid a ban after testing positive for marijuana. It was May 2015, two months after Russia's annexation of the Crimean peninsula, and a failed test at one of the first competitions in Russia featuring Crimeans could have been embarrassing.

STAR HIERARCHY

While covering for stars, officials routinely allowed obscure athletes to be banned in order to keep up the appearance of an efficient drug-testing system.

McLaren's report alleges more than 1,000 Russian athletes benefited from a coverup scheme administered by government officials and Rodchenkov, the Moscow lab director who later fled Russia and turned his emails over to WADA. Following criticism that his intermediate report in July lacked evidence to back up its claims, McLaren's full investigation is accompanied by a website containing thousands of pages of documents including years of emails, charts listing hundreds of suppressed tests and copious photographs of urine sample bottles with telltale scratches that McLaren says indicate they were tampered with.

None of the writers of the emails responded to requests for comment. However, the Russian authorities have not disputed the content of the messages. Some of the authors have been suspended from their jobs, as was then-Deputy Sports Minister Yuri Nagornykh, who was placed on leave in the summer and resigned in October.

The emails show a deeply corrupt system, with lab staff worried about their industrial-scale doping coverup being exposed while they faced pressure from ambitious officials to "save" more top Russian athletes from doping scandals.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Supreme Court secures NFL's $1B concussion pact

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday rejected challenges to the estimated $1-billion plan by the NFL to settle thousands of concussion lawsuits filed by former players, clearing the way for payouts to begin to those who have been diagnosed with brain injuries linked to repeated concussions. The settlement covers more than 20,000 retired NFL players for the next 65 years. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rams cut ties with Fisher

Jeff Fisher's tenure in Los Angeles didn't last one full season.

The Rams fired their coach on Monday. Special teams co-ordinator John Fassel will serve as interim coach. The Rams are at Seattle on Thursday night.

Fisher was the team's coach since 2012, and compiled a 31-45-1 record with the Rams. He oversaw the move from St. Louis to Los Angeles this past offseason.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NCAA FOOTBALL

'Bama, Ohio State lead all-Americans

No. 1 Alabama placed four players on The Associated Press All-America team, most of any school, and Louisville quarterback Lamar Jackson and fellow Heisman Trophy finalists Jabrill Peppers of Michigan and Dede Westbrook of Oklahoma were also first-team selections.

The Crimson Tide and No. 2 Ohio State tied for the most players on the three All-America teams released Monday with six. No. 3 Clemson had five players on the three teams, but none on the first team.

Lamar Jackson GETTY IMAGES

Jackson won the Heisman Saturday, finishing well ahead of Clemson's Deshaun Watson and Oklahoma's Baker Mayfield. The three quarterbacks lined up similarly on the All-America teams with Watson second-team and Mayfield third-team.

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Harmonious Roasted Chicken and Grapes

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

You might find this combination unexpected but we promise you'll love pairing of sweet grapes with shallots and garlic.

Ready in 35 minutes
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 25 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 4 chicken thighs
- 2 shallots, sliced
- 3 cloves of garlic, minced
- 3 cups red seedless grapes
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp dried thyme

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

2. In a large, oven-safe skillet, warm up olive oil over medium high heat. Brown — but don't worry about cooking through — the chicken thighs, about 3 minutes each side. Remove the chicken from the skillet and place on a clean plate.

3. Reduce the heat under the skillet to medium and toss in the shallots and garlic. Cook about 3 minutes until they soften. Add grapes, stock, vinegar, sugar and thyme and stir. Allow the sauce to begin to simmer.

4. Nestle the chicken pieces into the sauce and place the skillet in the oven. Bake for 20 minutes. Serve over cous cous, mashed potatoes or polenta.

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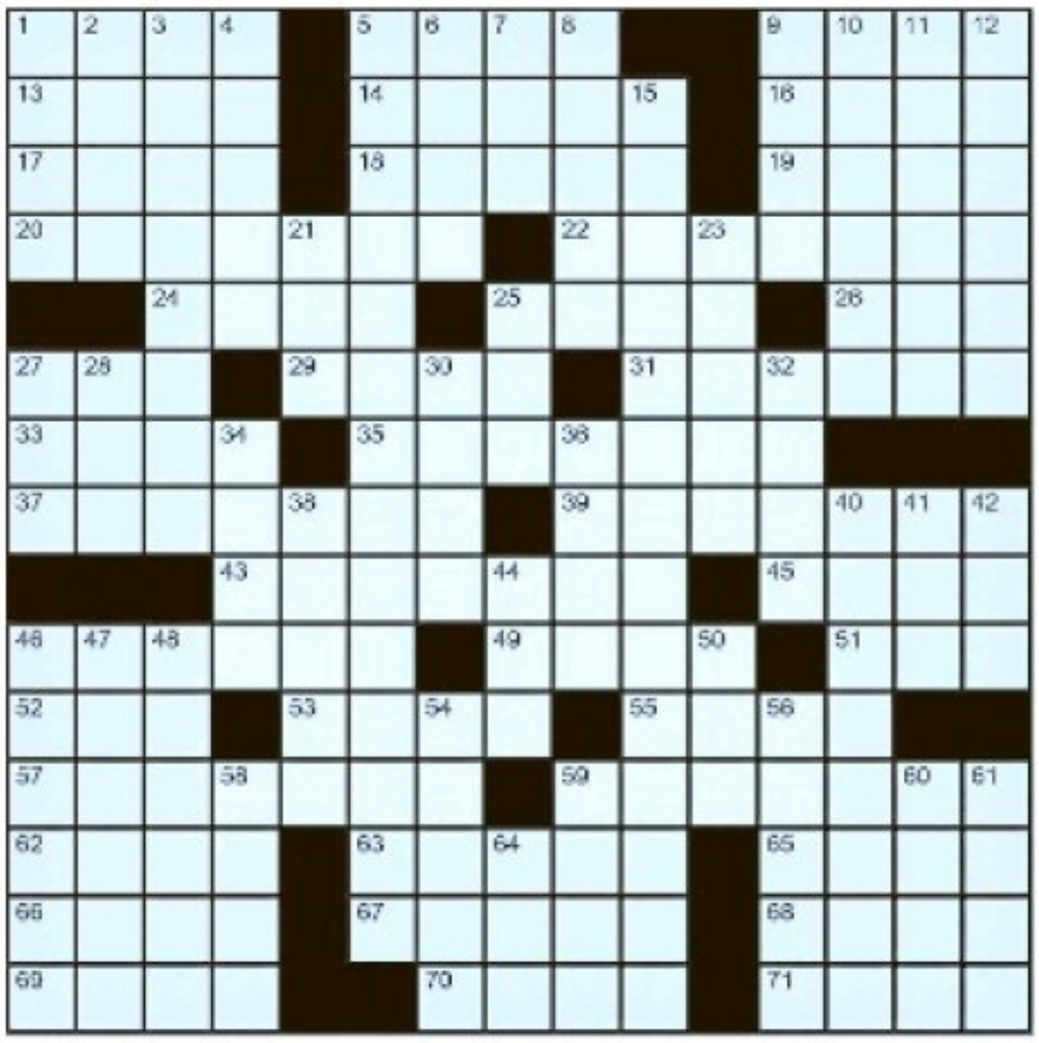
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Cleanser brand, _ and Span
5. Lip _
9. Prescriptions, commonly
13. Faux pas
14. Tragically Hip's "_ by a Century"
16. Handling the matter: 2 wds.
17. Boot
18. Herman's Hermits singer Peter
19. Jason's craft
20. Marxist revolutionary (b.1879 - d.1940) exiled by Stalin
22. Audience's highest showing of appreciation
24. Shark variety
25. Crossword component
26. Prompt in acting
27. Criticize
29. Questionable
31. _! Camera! Action!
33. Nero's 8
35. Reacts to the sniffing salts: 2 wds.
37. Loud noisiness, States-style
39. Most extensive
43. Is in need of repair
45. Ins and _
46. Relay knowledge
49. Jealousy
51. Wee woofer
52. 19th Greek alphabet letter
53. Twisted
55. Vow
57. "Vikings" airer, The _ Channel
59. Groups of fish
62. Moreover
63. Ms. Hall of ABC daytime show "The Chew"
65. _ Mountains (Range in Russia)
66. Spelled-out grades
67. "The Untouchables" role, _ Ness
68. Early helicopter
69. Increases
70. Superior at a French monastery
71. Door fastener

DOWN
1. Prude
2. Really rain
3. Getting a good night's sleep inability
4. Terra's pot tailer
5. CIBC = Canadian Imperial _ _ _
6. Holler at the harbour!
7. Roaring sign
8. Lord's house
9. Castle defence
10. Fortify the food
11. Do this after a big Winter storm: 2 wds.
12. Rocks
15. 1997 Keanu Reeves thriller co-starring Al Pacino: 2 wds.
21. Schuss
23. Mine entrances
25. Exerciser's club
27. Piping stuff, commonly
28. Feel awful
30. _ _ song (Cheaply)
32. Attend: 2 wds.
34. _-European (Language family)
36. Flush
38. Screen legend Greta
40. Super joyfulness
41. After-R trio
42. Sugar amt.
44. Comprehend
46. Home of Odysseus
47. Used a hammer
48. Was a mother hen
50. Cry of impatience!
54. Spiral-horned antelope
56. Sturdy
58. Chuck
59. Neatnik opposite
60. Metallica drummer Mr. Ulrich
61. Swill
64. Chest bone

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Your daily routine will change today. Expect to meet new faces and see new places. Avoid arguments with others, which might occur because of today's Full Moon.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Disputes about money and possessions are likely because of the full moon. Keep an eye on your possessions and finances. Be careful not to lose something.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Today, the only full moon in your sign all year is happening. This can create stress with partners and close friends. It's a jumpy, unpredictable day!

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You feel restless today because of the full moon. (The moon is your ruler.) Stay calm and carry on.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Conflict with friends might occur today because of the full moon's energy. But they also might occur because someone throws you a curveball or does something you don't expect.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
This is a tough full moon for you. You feel pulled between the demands of home and family versus the demands of your job and your career. (You can't ignore home and family.)

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Be careful, because this is an accident-prone day. Obviously, an accident doesn't need to happen, but it does mean you have to be more aware and mindful. Keep your eyes open.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Financial disputes and money problems might occur because of the full moon today. This might include arguments about cash or something that you own. Be patient.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Today, the only full moon all year that is opposite your sign is taking place. This might introduce tension and conflict with partners and close friends. Have patience.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Be patient with co-workers today, because everyone can feel the Full Moon's energy. This tends to make people feel excitable and inclined to overreact.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Be patient with kids today, and likewise, be patient with your friends or members of groups. People are inclined to be touchy today and even tomorrow because of the full moon.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
This is a poor day to try to keep everyone happy, especially bosses, parents, VIPs, your family and your job. It's all too much! Just do what you can.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

	3			5	1		8	
1								5
			6		7			
9		4				6		
7				4				3
		1				2		4
			1		2			
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	5		3	7			6	

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8	1	9	4	6	5	7	2	3
5	3	7	2	9	1	4	6	8
6	4	2	8	3	7	1	5	9
9	5	6	1	2	8	3	4	7
1	8	4	7	5	3	2	9	6
7	2	3	6	4	9	8	1	5
2	9	5	3	8	4	6	7	1
4	7	8	5	1	6	9	3	2
3	6	1	9	7	2	5	8	4

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